

## SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS FOR SUNDAY 21 MARCH 2021

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by ..... [your name, call sign and QTH]

The South African Radio League broadcasts a news bulletin each Sunday in Afrikaans and English at 08:15 and 08:30 Central African Time respectively on HF and various VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. The bulletin is relayed on Echolink by Johan, ZS6JPL. The audio bulletins can be downloaded from the League website at [www.sarl.org.za](http://www.sarl.org.za) while the text bulletin can be downloaded from <https://sarlnewsbulletin.wordpress.com/>. To join the Mailchimp bulletin mailing list, send an e-mail to the SARL Secretary.

In the news today:

THE SARL TECHNICAL SYMPOSIUM ON SATURDAY 27 MARCH 2021

THE 2021 SARL VIRTUAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

and

YOTA ON-LINE SESSION 11 ON 25 MARCH

Stay tuned for more information on these and other interesting news items.

We begin the bulletin this morning with news of a silent key.

It is with deep regret that we announce that the key of Dave Scully, ZS6AVM went silent on Tuesday night 16 March 2021. Dave was a long-standing member of the Antique Wireless Association and his voice was well known amongst many amateurs as the voice of the BBC or the Boksburg Broadcasting Centre.

We extend our sincere condolences to his family and friends.

PAUSE

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League.

THE SARL TECHNICAL SYMPOSIUM ON SATURDAY 27 MARCH 2021

Have you registered for the Unlocking Amateur Radio Technology Symposium which will take place from 10:00 to 14:15 CAT on 27 March 2021? Nico, ZS6QL will open the Symposium by asking why frequencies above 30 MHz are important for amateur radio's future? Then Brian, ZS6YZ will talk about the SARL Next Generation Beacon programme and Dick, ZS6BUN will give us the cost of a dB on two metres. Following the refreshment break, Chris, ZS6EZ gives us Contesting 101 and Anton, ZR6AIC shows how to build your own QO-100 station from locally available components. Pierre Cilliers from SANSA Space Sciences will discuss frequency predictions - the why and how, and the role

of radio amateurs in refining the process. This will be followed by an open discussion session to close off the Symposium.

Book your seat now. It is free for SARL members and R50 for non-members. To register for the symposium, click on the link on the front page of the League web site. Registration will close at 23:59 CAT on Thursday 25 March. A link to allow you entrance to the symposium will be sent to you by e-mail on or before 26 March 2021, to the e-mail address as indicated on your registration form.

#### **ELECTRONIC VOTING FOR THE 2020 SARL ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

In terms of Rule 8.9, the SARL Annual Financial Statements for the Year ended 30 June 2020 were uploaded to the SARL web site on Friday 12 March 2021 and an SARL Communication was sent to members on the same date. You can also follow the link on the front page of the SARL web site to download a copy of the document. Members have thirty (30) days to consider the accounts whereafter an electronic vote will take place. Details about the voting will be published in SARL News closer to the time.

#### **THE 2021 SARL VIRTUAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The 2021 SARL AGM will be held on the Bluejeans online platform on Saturday 17 April 2021. So, you can sit in your favourite chair and attend the AGM and there is no charge to log into Bluejeans. It is free! The 2021 SARL AGM Booklet is available for download, so follow the link on the front page of the SARL web site to download your copy. The link to register for the AGM is in the document.

#### **ONGOING LICENCE RENEWAL ISSUES**

The failure of ICASA to supply a detailed guideline on how to change to the new online licence renewal system has necessitated that the SARL develop its own guideline which will be available early next week on [www.sarl.org.za](http://www.sarl.org.za).

The SARL is still pursuing ICASA to extend the 1 April deadline. The SARL is also planning a video conference at 20:00 CAT on Wednesday 24 March on the Bluejeans Platform to assist members with the renewal process. Details will be published on the SARL web together with the URL.

The licence renewal is just one of many issues on the SARL/ICASA agenda. Some issues date back over two years. To complicate matters, the lockdown and working from home has further complicating meeting with senior ICASA personnel.

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#### **YOTA ON-LINE SESSION 11 ON 25 MARCH**

YOTA Online session #11, will take place from 19:00 UTC on Thursday 25 March 2021 and the main topic will be "JOTA - Scouts in Ham Radio." We

will introduce our community to another fantastic aspect of our common hobby, which is Jamboree on the Air, together with our amazing guests live on the show. Furthermore, we will also have a special prize draw after solving our new riddle live on the show. We will give away more ICOM merchandise packages for that occasion. You can find the press release and further pictures/logos at <https://cloud.ham-yota.com/s/gwgo6RJDXkDCerb> and [www.ham-yota.com/yota-online-11/](http://www.ham-yota.com/yota-online-11/)

Hope to see you online!

#### ARISS AMATEUR STATION IN COLUMBUS MODULE IS ONCE AGAIN OPERATIONAL

Some 6 weeks after going silent following a spacewalk that installed new antenna cabling, the amateur radio on the International Space Station's amateur station in the Columbus module is once again operational. The Columbus station, which typically uses the call sign NA1SS, is the primary ARISS amateur radio station used for school contacts and other activities. The problem arose after a 27 January spacewalk replaced a coax feed line installed 11 years ago with another, built by the European Space Agency (ESA) and Airbus.

While the specific cause of the problem has not yet been determined, a 13 March spacewalk that restored the antenna cabling to its original configuration provided the cure. The plan to return the ARISS cabling to its original configuration had been a "contingency task" for a 5 March spacewalk, but the astronauts ran out of time. The ARISS work was appended to the to-do list for astronauts Mike Hopkins, KF5LJG and Victor Glover KI5BKC, to complete a week later.

During the weekend spacewalk, Hopkins swapped out a cable for the Bartolomeo commercial payload-handling platform that had been installed in series with the ARISS VHF-UHF antenna feed line, returning the ARISS system to its pre-27 January configuration. Hopkins raised a question concerning a sharp bend in the cable near a connector, but no further adjustments were possible.

On 14 March, ARISS was able to confirm the operation's success when Automatic Packet Reporting System (APRS) signals on 145,825 MHz were heard in California, Utah and Idaho as the ISS passed overhead. ARISS team member Christy Hunter, KB6LTY was able to digipeat through NA1SS during the pass. With additional confirmation from stations in South America and the Middle East, ARISS declared the radio system operational again.

#### CONTEST NEWS

Twenty-two logs were received for the SARL YL Sprint held on Saturday 6 March 2021.

1<sup>st</sup> Karin Andrew, ZS6MMA – 162 points

2<sup>nd</sup> Beverley van Tonder, ZR6BVT and Denie Schnetler, ZS6BNI - 114 points

3<sup>rd</sup> Veronica Kotze, ZR6TVK - 105 points

4<sup>th</sup> Erika Byleveldt, ZS6ETB and Marjoke Schuitemaker, ZS5V – 93 points each

Over the weekend of 27 and 28 March, you can participate in the CQ WPX SSB Contest which runs from 00:00 UTC (02:00 CAT) on Saturday and ends 48 hours later. Activity is on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 metres and the exchange is a RS report plus a progressive contact serial number starting with 001 for the first contact. Multi-Two, Multi-Unlimited and Multi-Distributed entrants use separate serial number sequences on each band. Please Observe the established band plans applicable to Region 1. Find the rules at [www.cqwpx.com/rules.htm](http://www.cqwpx.com/rules.htm)

On Thursday evening 1 April, the first leg of the SARL 80 m QSO Party is on the air with the first RaDAR Challenge on Saturday 3 April. More information in next Sunday's bulletin.

#### PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to be at low levels. There is a single sunspot region with a simple magnetic configuration visible. No solar flaring is expected. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around one. The 15 to 30 m bands may provide some good DX fun especially during the late afternoons. Please visit the website [spaceweather.sansa.org.za](http://spaceweather.sansa.org.za) for further information.

Finally, a diary of some upcoming events:

Today – Human Rights Day and the Namibian Independence Day

22 March – Public Holiday in Namibia and South Africa and World Water Day

23 March – World Meteorological Day

27 March – The SARL Technical Symposium on the Bluejeans platform; the Cape Town and Boland Club meetings.

27 and 28 March – The CQ WPX SSB Contest

30 March – the Secunda ARC meeting

1 April – the SARL 80 m QSO Party

2 April – Good Friday

3 April – the RaDAR Challenge

5 April – Family Day

10 April – Autumn QRP Contest

17 April – the SARL Virtual AGM

18 April – the World Amateur Radio Day – work ZS95SARL

To conclude our bulletin, a recap of our main news story:

Have you registered for the Unlocking Amateur Radio Technology Symposium which will take place from 10:00 to 14:15 CAT on 27 March 2021? Book your seat now. It is free for SARL members and R50 for non-members. To register for the symposium, click on the link on the front page of the League web site. Registration will close at 23:59 CAT on Thursday 25 March.

This concludes our bulletin for this morning.

We invite clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, in both English and Afrikaans, if possible, by following the News Inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items to be included in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly radio programme, Amateur Radio Today at 10:00 CAT. The programme can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band by courtesy of Louis, ZS5LP. A rebroadcast by Andy, ZS6ADY, can be heard on Monday evenings at 19:30 CAT on 3 620 kHz.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to [artoday@sarl.org.za](mailto:artoday@sarl.org.za).

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dennis Green, ZS4BS, edited by Dave Reece, ZS1DFR and read by .....

From the news team, best wishes for the week ahead.